

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 131110Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8527

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 3145

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS PFOR ET US

SUBJ PEACE LION DELIVERY

REF: STATE 059342

HAVING RECEIVED A NUMBER OF INQUIRIES REQUESTING CONFIRMATION OF DATE FOR DELIVERY OF F-5E'S, AMB YESTERDAY AUTHORIZED ACTING CHMAAG COL FISK TO INFORM DEFMIN OF DELAY, USING LANGUAGE PARA 2 REFTEL. MAAG AIR SECTION ALSO AUTHORIZED TO INFORM ETH AIR FORCE CONTACTS, USING SAME LANGUAGE.

ETHIOPIAN REACTION INITIALLY CALM, WITH DEFMIN SAYING HE WOULD ASK ETH EMBASSY WASH TO INQUIRE REASON FOR DELAY. WE NOW LEARN THAT DEFMIN HAS BECOME VERY UPSET AND HAS TOLD INTERMEDIATE ETHIOPIAN SOURCE THAT DIRG WILL CERTAINLY MISUNDERSTAND, AND WILL ASCRIBE VARIOUS MALIGN POLITICAL MOTIVES TO USG, WITH UNPREDICTABLE CONSEQUENCES. DEFMIN REPORTEDLY THINKS THAT AMB NOT MAAG SHOULD CONVEY SUCH MESSAGES, AND THAT UNLESS SATISFACTORY REASON FOR DELAY IS EXPLAINED, DEFMIN WILL PROCEED TUES MARCH 16 TO INSTITUTE PLANNED EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY

MEASURES AT AIRPORT FOR RECEIPT OF C-5, INCLUDING CANCELLATION INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS. BELIEVE THIS IS EMPTY THREAT DESIGNED TO PRESSURE USG FOR EXPLANATION. HOWEVER AMB HAS PHONED FONMIN KIFLE TODAY AND GIVEN HIM SAME LANGUAGE PARA 2 REFTEL. KIFLE WAS AWARE OF NEWS OF DELAY, AND HE SAID ONLY THAT ETH EMBASSY WASH WAS SEEKING EXPLANATION. WE WILL CHECK MONDAY TO BE SURE DEFMIN DOES NOT CARRY OUT AIRPORT MEASURES TUES.

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COMMENT: (1) EPMG MAY BE AWARE THAT USG HS NOT YET REQUESTED

OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES, WHICH IN CASE OF EGYPT IS KNOWN TO TAKE ABOUT TWO WEEKS ADVANCE NOTICE. THUS EPMG MAY DISCOVER DECISION TO DELAY WAS TAKEN SOME TIME BEFORE NOTIFICATION TO EPMG YESTERDAY.

(2) AGE AND SPARES FOR F-5E'S HAVE NOT ARRIVED ADDIS, AND ARE JUST NOW BEING DELIVERED TO EPMG FREIGHT FORWARDER IN US. PERHAPS WASH CAN THINK OF WAY TO USE THIS FACT AS EXPLANATION, CITING CONGRESSIONAL INSISTENCE THAT SUCH ITEMS NOT BE DELIVERED UNTIL COUNTRIES ARE READY TO RECEIVE THEM. IF THIS IS TRIED, WOULD REMIND DEPT THAT EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT ETHIOPIAN DATT AND/OR EPMG IN WASH HEARS ONLY THAT OFFICIAL LINE.

(3) FIRST OF TWO LONG-AWAITED TPS-43 RADARS ARRIVES IN A FEW DAYS, WHICH MAY HAVE SOME (BUT NOT MUCH) CALMING EFFECT ON SUSPICIOUS ETHIOPIANS.

HUMMEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, TRANSPORTATION, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ADDIS03145
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760095-0904
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760364/aaaacekh.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 STATE 59342
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <02 NOV 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PEACE LION DELIVERY
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, ET, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006